

Values Statements

Whether you call them values, guiding principles or beliefs, these are the core philosophies describing how an organization conducts itself in carrying out its mission. Values or Guiding principles are the beliefs supporting the mission and vision. Values are most obvious in how the organization does things and with whom it does them, not necessarily what it does.

A values statement articulates how the organization will conduct itself.

Guiding principles/Core values must guide the day-to-day behavior of everyone in the organization, if it is to be successful in achieving its mission. They are our most basic beliefs – our credo - that guides everything we do.

Criteria for guiding principles/values

The best statements of guiding principles express the organization's attitude and values about three things:

- People: The way people inside and outside the organization are treated.
- Process: The way the organization is managed, decisions are made and products or services are provided.
- Performance: Expectations concerning the organization's responsibilities and the quality of its products and services.

Guiding principles/values exercise

1. Each participant takes 3 -5 post-it notes and writes one of their guiding principles/values (a word or phrase) for the organization on each post-it.
2. Each participant places their post-it notes on the board at the front of the room.
3. Without talking, delete duplicates and sort the ideas into categories – things that seem to fit together.
4. As a group, create headings for each category grouping.
5. For each category, write a values statement.
6. Review the values with everyone to assure understanding and agreement.
7. Decide how these will be reflected in the organization.